

BALLET TODAY

VOL. 3. No. 26

AUGUST 1950



A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO BALLET EVERYWHERE

1/-

PETER REVITT'S

BALLET GUYED

with a foreword by MARY CLARKE

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Published by:— **BALLET TODAY**, 4, HOLBORN PLACE, LONDON, W.C.1

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Ballet Today

Vol. 3. No. 26

August 1950

Offices - 4 HOLBORN PLACE, LONDON, W.C.1

Telephone: Chancery 8471

EDITORIAL - Telephone: Flaxman 9552

EDITORIAL COMMENT

ONE cannot but be filled with wonder when contemplating the difference between American and English publicity methods as exemplified by the campaign carried on by Mr. S. Hurok on behalf of Sadler's Wells Ballet in America and the small paragraphs in the London press for visiting companies to the Royal Opera House. Let us consider for a moment. Last year, Sadler's Wells Ballet paid their first visit to America. Four months before they arrived, splash advertisements were already appearing in the press heralding them as the greatest theatrical attraction of the century. Remember that the dancers (apart from Coira Shearer and Robert Helpmann, the "film stars") were completely unknown to the American public and so were all the ballets. Visiting Americans here had always been adamant that America would not "take" the evening-length classics, but the wily Mr. Hurok, instead of being frightened off, gave them star billing. Long before the company arrived there must have been very few people on the whole of the north American continent who were not aware that they were coming. The advance booking broke all records for the Metropolitan Opera House and a civic welcome awaited them after the first night. We all know how the company rose to the occasion, more than justified every word of the preliminary announcements and had the whole of America and Canada at their feet, but it would have been rather harder for them if they had crawled in practically unheralded. This year they are returning, and an announcement of the fact might have been thought sufficient. But not for Mr. Hurok. Six months before the opening date at the Met. the campaign re-started. This time it is the Fabulous Sadler's Wells Ballet that is visiting the United States, and long before the first night arrives it is expected that every seat for the whole of the New York season will have been sold.

Now let us examine the reverse of the medal. The New York City Ballet opened at Covent Garden on

July 10th. The ballet magazines, on their own initiative, each gave them a feature spread well beforehand, but only the regular ballet goers could have been aware of this visit, and they are not enough to fill the Royal Opera House for five or six weeks. Small paragraphs in the daily press a few days before the box office opened was all the advance notice. *The Times* gave a dignified sixth of a column in which only three of the ballets in the repertoire were mentioned by name (ignoring the fact that the revival of *The Fire Bird*, one of the three, was an entirely new version by George Balanchine), and omitting entirely from the list of artists the names of the two leading male dancers.

The two cases are not, of course, parallel. Mr. S. Hurok is an impresario who rents the Metropolitan Opera House for a certain period just as any ordinary theatre might be rented. It is then up to him to publicise the company he presents there and make it sound as big an attraction as possible because he stands to lose money if the house is not filled. The Royal Opera House is no longer a public theatre, but receives an enormous annual grant from the Treasury for the presentation there of our own Opera and Ballet. A visiting company is an "extra" engaged at an arranged fee, and it is possibly a matter of indifference to the administrators whether the public comes or stays away. Indeed, judging by the lackadaisical attitude at the box office, those in charge there really do not care whether anyone comes or not.

If there is a moral in all this it is, perhaps, that any company from abroad that wishes to appear at Covent Garden would be well advised to make their own publicity arrangements. Ballet Theatre, which is to follow on immediately after the New York City Ballet visit and the single week of Sadler's Wells prior to their departure, may like to make a note of this.

It is good to know that Alicia Markova has made a splendid recovery from her operation for appendicitis which so unhappily brought the Markova-Dolin tour of the English provinces to a close and caused the cancellation of the projected week at the Royal Albert Hall. Violetta Elvin was given permission by the Sadler's Wells Ballet to take Markova's place at Southend-on-Sea and appeared there for four days, dancing the second act of *Swan Lake* and the last act of *Casse Noisette* (which she learned in a day, dancing it the same evening). In difficult circumstances she completely won her audiences and had a very great

(Continued at foot of page 21)

The action photograph by Frank Sharman on the cover shows Mona Inglesby in "Gaiete Parisienne" and was taken during the first performance at the Coliseum

SOME CLASSICS AND DANTE SONATA

By MARY CLARKE

THE fairly straightforward ballet repertory that always accompanies The Ring at Covent Garden gave us this year an interesting series of the classical ballets with their alternative casts.

If any members of the audience had rashly decided while Fonteyn was in Milan that we could get along quite nicely in her absence they must have bitten their tongues out while watching her recent performances in *Le Lac des Cygnes*. They have provided some of those great nights that the true balletomane lives for and which make worthwhile all the routine or humdrum performances in between. Each year we think Fonteyn is at the peak of her career and each year she

finds something new in her great roles and surprises us with the discovery. Her Odette and her Aurora have developed steadily all her dancing life and I do not doubt but that they will continue to do so as long as she continues to dance them.

On the other hand, however, there is her Giselle. She is now dancing it with a technical perfection and finesse that leaves nothing to be desired but I find it almost too perfect a *dance* performance; in polishing this aspect of the role she has lost touch with the emotional appeal and no longer moves me as she used. Back in the days when she had not fully mastered the choreographic technicalities she could tear the heart



BERYL GREY WITH KENNETH MACMILLAN AND JOHN FIELD IN "BALLET IMPERIAL".
BERYL GREY'S PERFORMANCE IN THIS BALLET HAS BEEN ONE OF THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PAST SEASON

Photograph by Roger Wood

her pitiful first act but now the spontaneity seems to have disappeared and it is too obviously a performance—more thought than felt. If she could only recapture this quality, learn Markova's secret of etherealism in the second act, and yet retain her present standard of dancing then what a Giselle would she be!

When Moira Shearer first appeared in *Giselle* at Covent Garden I thought her badly miscast and simply putting up a good fight against a tradition into which she could never fit. Yet last month, when I saw her once again, she showed such enormous improvement that I was genuinely moved by her performance. She obviously thought a great deal about the character and presents Giselle first of all as a girl living at an emotional tension which might very easily snap and result in madness. She makes very clear the fact that Giselle does kill herself and die a suicide, clutching her wound and recoiling from the sight of blood. And in the second act she makes the only possible sense of the ridiculous ending used at Covent Garden by indicating plainly to Albrecht that *that* is the place where she wishes to be laid. She dances beautifully throughout and with a new freedom; she has great elevation, is wonderfully light and performs both beats and turns excellently. Her hands and arms are still her weakest point and there is a tendency to over-elaborate some of the adagio passages in the second act. Her make-up is poor, being far too heavy and sophisticated throughout, and her second-act costume and head-dress is far too glamorous. Nothing could be less suited to the simple Giselle than sequins.

The Sadler's Wells production of *Giselle* will undoubtedly be immensely successful in America this year as it is so much better than those given by the two American companies but relative superiority is not a very satisfying achievement and it would reflect enormous credit on everyone if Madame Rambert and Mr. Beaumont were called in to revise some of the staging and make sense of some of the present dramatic anomalies. There were some very unattractive new movements for the Wilis and their Queen in recent performances.

Beryl Grey's performances in *Le Lac des Cygnes* were indeed welcome after having been postponed so long by her illness earlier in the year. She has spent the interim in studying the characters of Odette-Odile, however, and has added a great deal to her interpretations. Odette is now very timorous at first, full of nervous darting movements and gradually warming with her love for Siegfried. I think she might make a little more of this change from abrupt, nervous movements to the pure legato of the second act adagio. She dances very well—so well that she can afford to throw away some of the technical fireworks for the sake of simplicity and she should certainly avoid all flamboy-

antly theatrical gestures which only emphasise her height. External gestures anyway play a small part in the great romantic roles: the emotion must come from *within*.

Odile has always suited Grey better than Odette because she has a naturally resourceful and dominating presence that is with difficulty subdued to the unhappy Swan Queen. Her Odile is superficially identical (one can well sympathise with Siegfried in his confusion) and yet has an icy heart. I do not quite know how this is achieved but it is remarkably effective. She dances the third act with wonderful assurance and is even better in the solo passages than the *pas de deux*. Indeed, that probably sums up the biggest deficiency in her performance: it is too self-sufficient. This is understandable, as she has had many partners and not all of them have been capable of performances on a level with hers, but it is something that must now be worked on and remedied for it is not possible to play a tragic love story by oneself.

I was doubtful about the decision to revive *Dante Sonata*, fearing that its original impact had been too closely bound up with the crises through which both dancers and audience were then living. But in the event it still comes across, rather differently but with enduring tragic effect. The emphasis is a little changed emotionally, for the helpless bewildered quality has matured into an expression of equal helplessness but less bewilderment. Now one feels that the Children of Light are more aware of what they are up against and the Children of Darkness more aware of their damnation, exult in it as they may. It is still performed with complete conviction and dedication by all the company and has the benefit of all five of the original leading dancers, each of whom has proved irreplaceable. Pamela May, in particular, seemed to me to dance with an especial fervour and inspiration. I have always found the figure which she portrays the most tragic and moving of them all because she seems to understand more of the world's dilemma and therefore to suffer with a more terrible intensity; it is a conception which must inevitably gain depth and weight with the passage of time and the addition of experience. Fonteyn and Sones, struggling against an evil world, seemed also to have gained in power and Helpmann and Brae, exulting in their own evil yet unable to stamp out entirely the good against which they strive, still make their effect.

The re-expanded *Facade* starts well with a brilliant little Scottish Rhapsody, good Yodelling song and smart Polka (the best thing Rosemary Lindsay does). It reaches a glorious climax now with the Fox Trot in which Kenneth Macmillan, Sheila Nelson and Anne Negus (what a comedienne!) perform excellently while Leslie Edwards excels himself as the most de-

(Continued on page 9)



Action photograph by Frank Sharman

THE CAN-CAN DANCERS IN "GAITE PARISIENNE"

LONDON SEASON OF THE INTERNATIONAL BALLET

THE International Ballet makes comparatively rare appearances in central London although it can often be seen in the large cinemas of the inner and outer suburbs, and in the provinces it is the company that represents 'Ballet' to many thousands of enthusiasts.

It is very proud of the fact that it has presented its work before larger audiences than any other company either in this country or in Europe but there are certain defects attached to playing consistently before audiences so much larger than normal, and these become obvious when the company is seen in a West End theatre, even one so large as the Coliseum where it appeared for just over six weeks from May 4th to June 17th.

The season opened with the full length *Swan Lake* and it immediately became clear that the performance year after year of a small repertoire overweighted with what we know as 'the classics' has a stultifying effect on the dancers who, in spite of the importance of a London first night seemed unable to find any stimulus

which could give that essential touch of excitement to their work. There was, instead, an all-over efficiency which rarely sparked into any kind of life. This also happened with *The Sleeping Princess*. There is a great deal to be said for appearing in enormous cinemas and making ballet available to many who either cannot or will not make the journey but these audiences necessarily know very little about what they are watching and will be all too easily satisfied. Also to dance on unsuitable stages in vast auditoriums makes any kind of subtlety of interpretation impossible and to go on doing this for any length of time must ultimately affect an artist.

In connection with the International Ballet's reproductions of the Maryinsky classics I noticed a curious thing. A great deal has always been made of the authenticity of these versions under the supervision of Nicolai Sergueeff, formerly *régisseur-général* at St. Petersburg; yet there are many small differences in the choreography of both *Swan Lake* and *The Sleeping*

less as they are now done compared with how they first performed in 1947 and 1948 respectively. One really believes that it is possible to be one hundred per cent. authentic in reproducing ballets which are well over fifty years old, and alterations to present day conditions can often be an improvement, but if authenticity is claimed then alterations should not be allowed to creep in without acknowledgment. Helene Armfelt's *Odette*, for example, differs very materially from that of Mona Inglesby, quite apart from individual interpretations of the role and character, and both have been altered choreographically from the way these artists first danced the

two additions to the International short list of modern ballets were presented during the Coliseum season. The first, *Visions*, by Julian Algo, *maître de ballet* of the Royal Swedish Ballet, was presented at Colford in November last but this was Central London's first viewing. It won first place in the Ballet Competition organised in 1945 by the International Archives of the Dance held that year in Stockholm, but even twenty years ago it must have seemed more than a little *à l'opéra* with its symbolical characters bearing such names as Soul, Lascivious, Dark, etc. The choreographer leaves it to the imagination of the audience as to what any of the actions mean, and at least one member remains completely baffled. The company faced it with great conviction and spirit so possibly it had been explained to them.

The revival by Massine of his *Gaieté Parisienne*, now twelve years old, came to the rescue of a repertoire which is certainly on the glum side. This bears about the same resemblance to the original production as the Sadler's Wells revival of *La Boutique Fantasque* does to the Diaghilev ballet, but since *Gaieté Parisienne* was not such a good ballet in the first instance it is proportionately less disappointing; in fact it will give a very great deal of pleasure to everyone to whom it is new for, although it has lost considerably in pace, it is still packed with a variety of ingenious and charming dancing. It would have been courteous for the programme to have acknowledged the debt to the original designer, Comte Etienne de Beaumont, rather than have labelled the scenery and costumes as being 'after Winterhalter' who never painted anyone lower in the social scale than a duchess and would not have been even dead in the company kept at this café.

The Peruvian is not really a good part and it took all Massine's vibrant personality to put it over in 1938. Errol Addison is not therefore to blame if the role no longer seems an important one. Neither Ernest Lewitt nor Peter White seem to have any views as to the bearing of a member of the Viennese aristocracy of those days, though both partner well. Although Mona Inglesby has not the over-flowing vitality and

warmth of the two ladies who once used to dance the Glove Seller—Nina Tarakanova and Alexandra Danilova—she gives the part a quiet charm and dances with great lightness and grace. Her dress is one of the most beautiful seen on any ballet stage for years and it is, therefore, all the more a pity that when Helene Armfelt danced the role her costume should be completely different and exceptionally unbecoming.

The real heroes and heroines, however, are the *corps de ballet*. The men in particular showed up to great advantage and obviously enjoyed this chance to show what they could do. I wish I had been able to identify the waiter with a wonderful comedian's face and a huge air of revelling in every second, but the programme omitted all mention of any but the solo parts. The Can-Can was a little 'sticky' at early performances, some of the girls having difficulty with their *grands écarts* which should take them to the floor one after the other as swiftly as the knocking over of a line of dominoes, but this kind of dancing is still so new to them that one would rather praise them for having accomplished so much in so short a time.

English dancers must grow very tired of being accused of lack of vitality. Having regard to *Gaieté Parisienne* and the Massine, Balanchine and Petit ballets at Covent Garden, it does begin to look as though the fault lies rather with our choreographers.

International Ballet is very short at the moment of soloists of rank; the company was much stronger ten years ago than it is today. All companies, however, do go through these thin patches, and as it has already developed a number of soloists from its school and *corps de ballet* there is reason to believe that in another few months some promising if at present undeveloped talent will bring the necessary strengthening.

I was very impressed with the partnering of Peter White in a number of ballets. He is still very inexperienced as a dancer but in double work has a notable ease and finesse.

P.W.M.

International Ballet Tour

International Ballet are now in the middle of a four weeks' season at the Gaiety Theatre, Dublin, terminating on August 6th. Here are details of their itinerary for the next three months.

Aug. 17th-19th	Royal Court Theatre, Liverpool.
Aug. 21st-Sept. 2nd	Opera House, Manchester.
Sept. 4th-16th	Theatre Royal, Birmingham.
Sept. 18th-23rd	Globe Theatre, Stockton-on-Tees
Sept. 25th-30th	Lyceum, Sheffield.
Oct. 2nd-14th	Grand Theatre, Leeds.
Oct. 16th-21st	Theatre Royal, Nottingham.

THE CHOREOGRAPHER'S ART IN OUR TIME (3)

By PAUL TASSOVIN

TO conclude my observations on the choreographer's art I should like to consider the works created today in juxtaposition with those of the past, not forgetting to keep an eye on the future. There have been evolutions and cycles of fashions and styles of romantic, classical, classical-romantic, abstract, realistic, surrealist, neo-classic, modern, psychological, etc., and if we study closely we may find that each cycle was right or of some importance in its correct time and place, and that it was eloquent and conclusive to the audience of its day. We may find also that few ballets of a past epoch can be happily recreated into the present; and those old masterpieces that by their immortal qualities can live again, have to be specially treated, and reproduced in the tempo or genre of this present age. Even so, it happens not infrequently that despite all the loving care of those responsible for such revivals they fail to live spontaneously because of the absence of the artist or artists who served to interpret the original creation.

Thus it is difficult to make comparisons of past and present with any degree of certainty or finality. And only those who have lived close to the ballet, and studied the art, and know of the lustre of tradition, and the glories of the past, will find today's offerings stale and mediocre: only they can appreciate the transition which has made a connoisseur's art into a Woolworth's bargain. But has ballet really become just an entertainment for the masses? And does popularity call for a lowering of standards? Is quality at the mercy of the laws of demand; or is it limited by the sources of supply? I think the demand for greatness is insatiable: greatness itself is rare.

What do we have of greatness today? What trends may we see in the foremost choreographers of our time, in Balanchine the classicist, Tudor the psychologist, Aston the skilled miniaturist, Petit the poetic dilettante? Balanchine has carried the classical art to the extreme limits of abstract musical interpretation, retaining always the purity of dance. Tudor would appear to have become lost in his own undertow; intellect overpowering the dance flow. Ashton I feel has never quite found himself; Petit the prodigal, most gifted and imaginative of the younger school, is inconstant, fickle.

In these four leading choreographers one can find no progressive trend, no decisive direction, but rather a pastiche of so much that has gone before. It would

almost seem that the young art of ballet has already outgrown itself. A Chekovian friend of mine exclaimed recently: "Ballet is a corpse. It is dead. No use to try and revive it." He is wrong of course, Ballet is very much alive; but one must admit a grain of truth in his utterance. The style and spirit of the dance, and the fashion of Imperial Russia has withered and died. The style of the renaissance is gone, and style shows breeding and quality. There is such an absence of style today, and in its place we have tricks of stage-craft, a uniformity and lifeless form inclined towards anti-dance. I say anti-dance because physical jerks and acrobatics are outside the aesthetics of dance, and can only serve to degenerate the art.

One can observe far more definite trends in music and painting than in choreography, probably because of the greater age and maturity of these latter arts. Ballet in comparison is an infant, a changeling. Though it has been called the climax and apotheosis of all the arts, it is often brash, insensitive, pseudo, ephemeral. Until now its foundations have hung on shifting sands . . . the sands of man's fickle memory. Only those facets which were caught and retained in the mind could be passed on from generation to generation.

It is not surprising then that this elf of beauty lacks the strength and the nerve, the persevering stamina to surge into those evasive and unchartered avenues that lead from the Joyce world of disorder and chaos to the new divine, the new delectable. No wonder that Ballet remains self-conscious of its form, stiff and awkward, bogged down in the abstract, and taking the line of least resistance. What do the words realism and sublimation mean to the choreographer of today? Realism is Life: Sublimation is the process of Art. The choreographer faces his problem mutely; helplessly inarticulate.

With the desire to throw off the yoke of impotency; to break away from the chains imposed by the classical and the conventional, the moderns have harked back to the primitive with its irregularities, its incoherencies, its hard stone-like strength and at the same time its gentle conceits, its affectations and high-browisms. One wonders whether that cavorting hive of industry will produce anything more than an abortive anthill on the far horizon. And one wonders . . .

I believe that we may eventually turn our eyes to the West. The art which sprang from the East has grown

self out ; is decadent. It lies in need of fresh sustenance and inspiration, whereas the seeds of that art which have spread and germinated in the new world have found a fresh vitality and strength ; an animation that may well inspire some eventful evolution.

I look for the merging of our shattered old life with the resilient new life. The vigour and industry of the West may serve as a fortuitous bridge to carry the creative dance to those unknown, unexplored territories that ballet yearns for.

In the meantime the expressive glow must be rekindled, the qualities of élan and nuance cultivated ; the soul of the poet must be encouraged to soar above the brassy materialism of the age. We must beware of staying smug and self-satisfied with false idols. We must make preparation and work to build for the renaissance of the future.

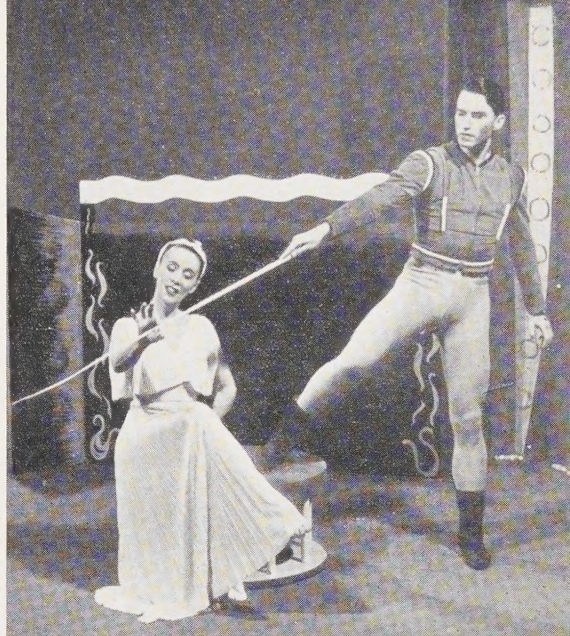
Probably that future lies in the unknown artist of tomorrow ; perhaps he is already born in the flesh, he may be somewhere growing up learning his craft, but as yet he has not appeared in public. And if he is ever to appear he will have to be endowed with the courage that moves mountains, and the mighty talent and fair fortune that the gods bestow only upon those they love.

Some Classics and Dante Sonata—(continued from page 5)

vastating, mad-gay, varsity exponent of the Charleston I ever hope to see. For this little gem of conscious artistry *Facade* is worth a place on any bill.

But from the Fox Trot onwards things deteriorate sadly. Popular Song is not for youngsters ; the whole point is that the dancers have been doing the same routine man and boy these twenty years. Country Dance was always my unfavourite episode and now seems less funny and more awkward than ever, while the costumes have gone sadly awry. In the Tango June Brae could be delightful if Ashton would revert to the original version, in which the Debutante was anything but worldly wise, but Alexander Grant is miscast again as the Dago—a role that demands not one of his special and individual abilities.

I think Grant might be used very effectively as the Leader of the Children of Darkness in *Dante Sonata* for he has a completely expressive body. This has been again apparent in his dancing of *The Dandy* in *The Three-Cornered Hat* which has a most invigorating vitality and does much to enliven performances of this ballet that are nowadays somewhat lethargic—excepting always the fruity Corregidor of John Hart which gets better and better and is fast becoming a comic masterpiece.



Photograph by Barbara Morgan

MARTHA GRAHAM AND ERICK HAWKINS IN "EVERY SOUL IS A CIRCUS", ONE OF THE BALLETS WHICH MARTHA GRAHAM IS PRESENTING DURING HER CURRENT SEASON AT THE PICCADILLY THEATRE

Ballet Scenario Contest

The Choreographers' Workshop, 471 Park Avenue, New York City, announces a BALLET SCENARIO CONTEST. A one hundred dollar (\$100) cash prize with a future production in view, will be awarded to the best scenario for a ballet.

CONTEST RULES :

Manuscripts are to be written in narrative prose.

(A suggested form is Jerome Robbins' synopsis for *Fancy Free* in *American Ballet*, by George Amberg.)

The scenario should not be more than three typewritten, double-spaced, pages.

A 250 word characterisation of the protagonist and a 250 word characterisation of the antagonist must accompany each scenario.

There should not be less than three or more than ten characters.

Scripts written in a foreign language must be accompanied by an English translation.

No scripts will be returned.

The prize winner will be announced November 1st, 1950. The decision of the judges will be final.

The judges are : Trudy Goth, John Latouche, Louis Horst, George Amberg, and Winnifred Kahn.

Submit manuscripts BEFORE SEPTEMBER 15th to : Trudy Goth (Director), Choreographers' Workshop, 471, Park Avenue, New York 22, N.Y.

RUTH PAGE AND HER COMPANY IN PARIS

By FERDINAND REYNA

THE first night public, or "Tout Paris" as people say here, gave a most unfavourable reception to Ruth Page's American ballets at their recent appearance at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées. A section of the Press assumed the same hostile attitude and poured ridicule on the productions. These gentlemen evidently wished to be revenged for the somewhat cool reception which the Paris Opera Company received last year in New York.

If, however, one discounts partisanship in favour of objective criticism, it must be admitted that the reception given to Ruth Page's ballets was not only severe, but actually unjust.

It would be useless to apply our European standards to the American product. These ballets do not show the same qualities which we look for in our own artists. They are, however, a genuine artistic expression, immediate and fundamentally new, which may shock

by its crudity and primitive force those habitués for whom ballet is expressed only in points and tutus. It is the same old story, similar to the first impact on Europe of jazz and modern American novels.

On the occasion of subsequent performances, however, the Parisian public showed a growing interest in these ballets.

It is always banal to speak of technique, but let it be clearly understood that Ruth Page's company works on the basis of a sound classical technique. The repertory is extensive, entirely new to Paris, and based on scores ranging from Purcell to Milhaud and from Liszt to Mompou, Villa Lobos, Gershwin, etc.

The most discussed ballet in their repertoire was the melodrama by Ruth Page and Bentley Stone, *Frankie and Johnny*. This was the subject of an abysmal misunderstanding on the first night, when it was believed that the ballet was intended as a tragedy and that the

RUTH PAGE AND BENTLEY STONE IN THE FINAL SCENE OF "FRANKIE AND JOHNNY"



artists had failed in their intentions by making the public laugh instead of cry. No one realised that the basis of this ballet is a strong and macabre irony, and that seen in this light it is a successful creation.

It is the tale of a bully divided between the love of two women. The action takes place in a street amongst the local low life ; bar-girls, beggars, soldiers, sailors, negro, etc., and in addition three Salvation Army brasses who play the part of chorus commenting on the action. Briefly, Frankie loves the bully Johnny, and when he deceives her with Nelly she kills him. The whole tone is pitched in an exaggerated key ; for instance, after the murder a black coffin is carried in by six men who dance a foxtrot before the final funeral party one-step. And then the two women, rivals for Johnny's love, are seen weeping in reconciliation, with both their heads through an enormous funeral wreath. All this is indeed laughable, but does not merit the jeers of scorn which greeted the first performance. This pantomime is strongly interpreted by Ruth Page, an amazing dancer with an expressive dramatic mask, and by Bentley Stone (Johnny) and Helene Kramer (Nelly).

Scrapbook consists of several short ballets ; in particular, *Tropics* creates the atmosphere of the jungle with its heaviness and mystery ; *Zephyr and Flora*, a deliberate but irresistible caricature of two classical dancers based on music by Liszt, and above all *Variations on Euclid*, music by Mompou, fine decor and costumes by Nicholas Remy, in which geometrical figures detach themselves and move in abstract patterns, strictly conceived. The tragedy of Othello is revived in *The Moor's Pavanne*, music by Henry Purcell and choreography of José Limon, who himself interprets part of the Moor, whilst Lucas Hoving plays the part of Iago, Pauline Koner that of Bianca and Betty Jones, Desdemona. Here too we are shown a pantomime, expressed entirely in dancing and completely intelligible, in which arms, wrists, hands and head all play their part. We are the spectators of a very studied work, in which every psychological nuance of the characters is given full value.

José Limon (the Indian), Pauline Koner (La Malinche) and Lucas Hoving (the Conquistador) interpret the ancient Mexican legend of *La Malinche* with considerable dramatic force.

These ballets, taken as a whole, show the influence of the Kurt Jooss school, and frequently recall Indian folklore. All Ruth Page's artists are true dancers, and the whole production is rhythmical and the costumes well chosen. It is indeed difficult to present an entirely new conception of ballet to old Europe, but Ruth Page's art is true American art, which may shock our sensibilities at first, but which is far from lacking in interest to intelligent persons who are not slaves to prejudice and chauvinistic limitations.



Photographs by John Lindquist

JOSE LIMON, ONE OF THE FOREMOST MODERN DANCERS OF THE DAY WHO APPEARED IN PARIS WITH LES BALLETS AMERICAINS

Roland Petit has opened his season at the Marigny Theatre with *Carmen*, Dancing with him in this ballet, Moira Shearer has obtained a real and well-deserved success. Tribute has been paid to this artiste who courageously undertook a role to which she was not naturally suited. Moira Shearer is no Carmen, but she gave us Carmen in spite of that fact. She did not force her talent, and her sensitive intelligence made her performance entirely acceptable and sympathetic to the Parisian public, which gave her a tremendous reception on the first night.

* * *

In striking contrast to the Ballets Americains reception was the public acclaim and critical appreciation given to the Ballet Rambert. They had the best press from the Paris critics of any visiting company for years, *Antonia* being a particularly striking success. The British Ambassador, Sir Oliver Harvey and Lady Harvey attended the first performance, the British Council gave them an official reception when Christian Dior dressed three of the girls, and Serge Lifar himself took the whole company on a tour of the Opéra.

The long awaited *première* of *Phèdre* took place on June 14th with Serge Lifar as Hippolyte, Roger Ritz as Thésée and, of course, Tamara Toumanova as

Phèdre. Writing of her beforehand Lifar said that she did not impersonate Phèdre, she *was* the tragic queen, and by all accounts this is one of the greatest triumphs of her career. The ballet was repeated the following week, June 21st, at the Nijinsky memorial performance when Lifar danced in *L'Après-midi d'un faune* (his own version without the nymphs) and the evening ended with *Petrouchka*, Michel Renault taking the name part. A special exhibition of Nijinsky memorabilia was arranged in the foyer.

*The Editor,
Ballet Today.*

Dear Madam,

With the holiday season approaching and with many people probably considering a visit to Paris I thought I would like to recount some of the experiences which for me, made Paris not only a city of wide boulevards and pavement cafés, of magnificent buildings and riverside book stalls but also the very spirit of ballet which gave me a nostalgia for the romantic times which can never be recaptured.

I found this feeling when I visited the Musée de l'Opéra and entered by the curved ramps which in themselves tell a romantic story; they were intended by the architect Garnier to be the private entrance for Napoléon III and Eugénie. This intention was never fulfilled for the Republic was already established before the building was completed. At the top of the broad stairway inside the entrance are the rooms which should also have been for the Emperor's private use. That there was no Emperor to use them prompted Nuittier, the archivist at that time, to suggest that the rooms should be used as a library and museum, and for this I think we should be for ever grateful to Nuittier.

At first glance the Musée seemed small, but within a few moments I did not know whether to look left or right, to dart forwards or backwards—or simply to stand still.

For me, some of the chief delights were the three small bronzes of Marie Taglioni, Fanny Elssler and Emma Livry; the marble bust of the exquisite Fanny Cerrito and water colours of the cousins Carlotta and Giulia Grisi. How slender a preference it was when Carlotta decided to devote herself to dancing rather than singing! Here too are souvenirs of Pavlova, Spessivtzeva, Taglioni; ballet shoes, a tiara, castanets. A caricature of Vestris is here, and a bronze of his alleged rival, the romantic looking Louis Dupont.

Composers and musicians have their place. A baton of Berlioz recalled *Symphonie Fantastique*; a statue of Rossini conjured up a series of delights, while a Stravinsky score for the orchestration of *Les Sylphides* came as a surprise to me at least.

There is one room of particular charm which is lined with *maquettes* of different productions at the Opéra. Among them are a setting for *La Filleule des Fées*, a ballet to music by Adam, and a setting for an early production of *Giselle*. Some of the *maquettes* are changed from time to time.

There are also many *maquettes* at Les Archives Internationales de la Danse. The Archives are only open on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, and the building is situated in the residential district of Passy. There is a friendly atmosphere, and although the Conservateur seemed a little surprised that someone who was not a dancer—just audience—had sought out the Archives, he soon had someone showing me round. Secretly I hoped to linger in the big office and browse among the cosmopolitan collection of books that lined the walls. Later, however, I was able to return to them, but was disappointed to find that they were wisely under lock and key!

The exhibits here were much as I expected . . . souvenirs of great dancers, such as Pavlova's costume

(Continued at foot of next page, column 1)

MOIRA SHEARER AS CARMEN, A PART SHE UNDERTOOK AT ROLAND PETIT'S REQUEST WHEN RENEE JEANMAIRE INJURED HER LEG

Photograph by Paul Wilson



JACOB'S PILLOW —

AMERICA'S SUMMER DANCE CAPITAL

ITS NINTH DANCE FESTIVAL SERIES AND ITS EIGHTEENTH SEASON OF INSTRUCTION IN VARIED FORMS BRING DANCERS TO THE HILLS

By ARTHUR TODD

DANCE activity in America is flourishing this summer as never before and the major share of these events are taking place at Ted Shawn's world-famous Jacob's Pillow near Lee, in the south-western section of Massachusetts. Here, set among the rolling hills and wooded countryside, not far-distant from the Berkshire Music Festival at Tanglewood, is the famous dance barn, first theatre in America to be built specifically for dance, where ballet, modern and ethnologic dance stars draw brilliant audiences while the adjoining studios throng with students from the length and breadth of the United States.

This summer the roster of guest stars and instructors boasts a glittering array of internationally known dance figures despite the fact that Ballet Theatre, the New York City Ballet Company and Martha Graham and her group will be appearing abroad. Especially noteworthy is the fact that this season the Faculty of the University of the Dance (which, incidentally, gives college credit though Springfield College) is distinguished by the presence of Margaret Craske,

the noted British ballet instructor, who is currently the Ballet Mistress of Ballet Theatre. Also of significance is the news that Herbert Ross, whose *Caprichos* was one of the major premières in Ballet Theatre's New York Spring Season at the Center Theatre (reviewed in the July, 1950 issue of *Ballet Today*), will be in residence all season at Jacob's Pillow with his newly organised company. Besides presenting his *Caprichos* again, choreographer Ross will also present his group in a new work during the last week in August. The ballet contingent for the festival series, in addition to Mr. Ross' company, includes Nana Gollner and Paul Petroff, who will dance on the opening and third programme of the series; Leon Danielian, star of Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, who will appear opposite Anna Istomina; Mia Slavenska and Company and the David Thimar Group. Other ballet luminaries include Patricia Bowman; Lillian Moore, who will premier a number of her dances which received such acclaim in Europe; also Bocchino (Tony Matthews), director of Dance Circle, with his company in *Micaela*, which is described as "Carmen'-with-a-happy-ending".

As is always the custom at Jacob's Pillow, the second section of each programme will feature modern dance. This season the outstanding contemporary figures will include José Limon and his Company, who have just returned to America after their first Paris season, and Pearl Primus, the young American-Negro dancer, who recently returned from her year's dance safari in Africa. Other important young dancers who will share programmes with leaders in the ballet and ethnic fields include Mark Ryder (formerly soloist with Martha Graham's Company) and Emily Frankel; Peter Hamilton, Felissa Conde and Jack Ferris, all members of Charles Weidman's Concert Group; Iva Kitchell, the dance satirist; and Myra Kinch, who is also on hand for the third season as instructor in Modern Dance. Ted Shawn, besides being over-all director of the school and the festival series, will also appear in a solo performance and in a revival for a large group, *Mountain Whippoorwill*. Pola Nirenska, the much-heralded English exponent of contemporary

(Continued from previous page)

for *Le Cygne* and Argentinina's castanets. There is an abundance of information of Jean Borlin and Les Ballets Suédois, even exceeding that on Diaghilev. This surprised me at first until it was explained to me that Rolf de Maré gave a great deal to the Archives as a tribute to Jean Borlin whom he greatly admired.

There is also a large and informative collection of model dolls performing folk dances from every corner of Europe and all perfectly dressed for their parts. Alongside these are costumes from the Orient, the East Indies and Bali where some of the archivists recently toured.

This is just a glimpse of the souvenirs of ballet in Paris, and I hope that any ballet-lovers who visit Paris will have the chance of seeing these things for themselves.

Yours truly,
JANET ROWSON.

dance, makes her debut on the opening programme of the season while Virginia Johnson's group will appear on the closing programme in *The Invisible Wife*, set to a poem by Winthrop Palmer.

Ethnic Dance, the third factor in each of the festival programmes (and in the curriculum, as well) includes such renowned exponents as Jean Louis Destine, who received permission from the Haitian government to bring a small company to America ; La Meri in solo, duet and ensemble works ; Mara and Company, with Michiko ; and Josefinia Garcia.

In addition to the total of forty-six performances during the ten-week season, there is a Monday night lecture programme. Though planned primarily for the resident students, visitors are also welcomed to these events which often fill the dance theatre. Among the lectures of special interest this season will be "The American Dancer in Europe", by Anatole Chujoy, Editor of *Dance News*, who will bring back a first-hand report on the New York City Ballet Company's reception at Covent Garden in July. Also scheduled are Doris Humphrey, whose theme is Choreography ; Dance Editor Walter Terry, of the *New York Herald Tribune*, who deals with Dance

Immortals, while Pearl Primus discusses Dark Rhythms, an account of her African dance experiences. Other prominent lecturers include Ted Shawn, John Lindquist, Carol Lynn, Dr. Josephine Rathbone, La Meri, Dr. Elizabeth Burchenal and Josefinia Garcia.

Ballet does and always has played a major role in both the teaching curriculum and the performance programmes at Jacob's Pillow. In consequence, nearly every major American ballet company, and their respective stars as well, have appeared and taught at Jacob's Pillow. Just last summer, the Ballet Theatre Company and its stars taught and appeared there throughout the season. The previous year (1948) the full roster of stars of the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo did likewise. Muriel Stuart, former dancer with Pavlova and an instructor with Balanchine's School of American Ballet, also taught at the Pillow as did Mme. Bronislava Nijinska. Though it is not generally known, Antony Tudor's *Pillar of Fire* was rehearsed there in 1941, the one season that Alicia Markova and Anton Dolin leased the premises from Shawn and both conducted the festival series and the school.

Those in Britain and the United States who are searching for closer bonds between British and

JOSE LIMON CONDUCTING A CLASS IN MODERN DANCE IN 1946 IN THE MAIN STUDIO

Photograph by Eric M. Sanford





Photograph by John Brefach

TED SHAWN AND MARGARET CRASKE IN THE DANCE DEPARTMENT OF THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY
HAVE A PREVIEW OF SHAWN MEMORABILIA WHICH WILL BE ON SPECIAL EXHIBITION THIS SUMMER

American ballet believe that Margaret Craske's appointment to the Faculty this season, following Antony Tudor's tenure last summer, may well point the way to a further exchange of dancers and instructors between Britain and America in the years to come. It is not beyond the realm of possibility that the Covent Garden Staff and members of the Sadler's Wells Ballet or the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet may be artists and teachers-in-residence some future summer vacation season at Jacob's Pillow.

Though the name and fame of Jacob's Pillow is known throughout the world, Ted Shawn's revolutionary and broadening theories of dance education are not yet appreciated to the same extent. However,

ever since his earliest days at Denishawn (the school founded by Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn), it has been Shawn's intense lifetime interest and major teaching theory that dance students, like university students, should have a balanced, rounded education. It is for this very reason that ballet, modern and some form of ethnologic dance are part of each day's teaching schedule and each performance programme as well. Thus, the programme of dance education at Jacob's Pillow assumes all the aspects of an academy or university of dance since the students are provided with a broad basis of several techniques and styles as well as the inter-related theories of history, composition, choreography, etc. Though this teaching approach



Photograph by Eric M. Sanford

CAPACITY ATTENDANCE GREET'S FESTIVAL SERIES. SEATS ARE SO PITCHED THAT EACH PATRON HAS A FULL, UNOBSTRUCTED VIEW OF THE STAGE

may seem overly broad in purpose, magnificent results are obtainable, for it is from a similar background of dance instruction that Doris Humphrey, Martha Graham and Charles Weidman emerged to become dominant figures in the contemporary dance world.

Though Jacob's Pillow is now a flourishing, full-scale artistic and financial success, its meteoric history is due entirely to Shawn's Herculean efforts in its behalf during the past two decades. Oddly enough, Shawn originally purchased this 150-acre site in 1930 mainly as a summer home and a retreat from New York. This mountain-side property was known as "Jacob's Ladder" while the old house carried the name of "Jacob's Pillow". By the summer of 1931, however, Shawn was living in the house and, as might be expected, had the largest of the three adjoining barns transformed into a studio. Here, in the fall of 1931, Shawn was joined by his entire professional touring company who rehearsed in the barn studio preparatory to the 1931-32 winter tour. The next summer the company ranged out from the Pillow and appeared at near by Stockbridge and at Peterborough

and Falmouth. During the following winter, Shawn taught some five hundred male physical education students at Springfield College, in Springfield, Massachusetts and in the spring of 1933 presented his then-revolutionary newly formed men's group in the first such full evening's professional dance programme which was held in Boston. The success of this historic event carried Shawn and his Men Dancers up and down the nation in the next seven years, during which time they gave over one thousand performances in more than seven hundred and fifty different cities in America. Shawn also took his men's group to London in 1935 for a season of special matinées at His Majesty's Theatre, followed by a longer engagement at the Apollo Theatre.

The earliest beginnings of the Pillow's present-day "dance festivals" may be traced back as far as 1933, when interested neighbours in growing numbers began to come over to watch the men's group classes and rehearsals. Consisting at first of informal talks and explanations of dance and dance activity, these events soon grew into regular Friday and Saturday

"lecture-demonstrations." After the disbanding of the men's group in 1939, when Shawn was certain that male dance would henceforth be honoured and respected, the school became co-educational with a full staff of resident and guest teachers on its faculty from 1940 onwards. By this time, week-end audiences could no longer be accommodated in the original studio and the outgrowth, a magnificently planned theatre for dance, was opened in 1942, America's first war-time summer.

During the summer week-ends the serious and otherwise scholarly Jacob's Pillow takes on a festive air and is teeming with activity. Then there are last minute lighting rehearsals, frantic scurrings into costumes and make-up while the lines begin forming at the box office. The audience arrives by limousine, station wagon, bus and bicycle—a veritable cross section of America. Scattered throughout the audience are dance critics from the New York and Boston newspapers, a visiting ballerina or two and probably a famous modern dancer, society leaders as well as young

musical students from near-by Tanglewood. Before the matinée, a large part of the audience foregathers for tea in the garden and in the evening intermissions they adjourn to the main teaching studio which is completely encircled by John Lindquist's dance photographs.

Over all the Pillow—its faculty, personnel and students, its well-chosen, professional programmes—is the dominating presence of Shawn. From sun-up until midnight he is busy with the countless managerial details, the operation of the classes and the supervision of the performances. Teaching or lecturing, entertaining visiting celebrities at the famous round-table in the dining room or chatting with old friends or students during intermissions, he is brimming over with dance fervour. He is a striking figure indeed, handsome, distinguished, affable, his greying hair further setting off his deep, sun-bronzed complexion. Shawn, viewed on the premises of his Jacob's Pillow, has the air of a pioneer and prophet who has finally found the Promised Land.

IGOR YOUSKEVITCH AND JOCELYN VOLLMAR OF BALLET THEATRE, TWO OF LAST YEAR'S VISITORS,
AT THE BOULDER WHICH IS CALLED "JACOB'S PILLOW"

Photograph by Walter E. Owen



THE PORTRAIT OF Mlle. SALLÉ

By MATTHEW HAYGARTH

MANY people are familiar with the paintings by N. Lancret of the famous 18th century dancer Marie-Anne Cupis de Camargo, or, as she was known "La Camargo." The best known of these paintings is in the Wallace Collection in London. An original repetition of this portrait, with a variation in the colour scheme, is in the Museum at Nantes; in the Hermitage at Leningrad there is a version which is considered to be a forerunner of the London version; at the Neues Palais at Potsdam there is another in which she is portrayed with a male dancer performing a *Pas de Deux*, with the title, "La Camargo avec son Danseur."

La Camargo had a rival in the dancer Marie Sallé. When Lancret had painted the portrait of La Camargo, nothing would satisfy her rival save that she too should be portrayed by the same artist. So it was that in April, 1732, the portrait of Marie Sallé was painted by Lancret. The journal *Mercur*e in announcing the portrait, commented—"Le *Sieur Lancret*, of the Academy, will shortly present to the public a portrait of Mlle. Sallé to serve as a companion piece to that he has already done of Mlle. Camargo. These two celebrated rivals, who by the diversity of their talents have contributed so much to the glory of their art, and who enjoy equally the favour of the public, merit the same immortality."

Voltaire was one of the first people to see this portrait. In a letter to his friend Nicolas-Claude Thieriot he wrote of it—"M. Ballot came to see me and took me to the studio of M. Lancret where I saw a very beautiful picture of the most beautiful priestess of Diana that has ever appeared on the stage, that is, the portrait of Mlle. Sallé. It is better than the portrait of Camargo; even so, there is something lacking, the resemblance is not perfect. The verses that are to appear on the print must be better than those with which M. La Faye has graced the portrait of Camargo, but I do not wish to compete with the amiable muse of young Bernard, who pays constant court to Mlle. Sallé, singing her praises everywhere and visiting her every day. For my part I have not seen her for some time although I have called at her house three or four times but each time she was out. I intend to call today and will speak of you to your idol."

Thus having aroused the jealousy of Thieriot, who adored Mlle. Sallé, the letter ends, "Pray excuse me for not having seen Mlle. Sallé. *Eriphile* has taken all my time and all my thoughts. Now that I have

delivered that tragic trash, I propose to go often to pay court to the true and modest virtue."

Voltaire kept to his promise, but there was more than the pleasure he derived from the company of the dancer that attracted him to her house, he desired that he, and not Gentil-Bernard should be the one chosen to compose the madrigal that was to appear on the print of the portrait. The portrait was to be engraved by N. de Larmessin. Already the engraver had started to work on the copper plate and the grave question of the verses that were to appear on it had not been settled.

In a later letter to Thieriot he wrote, "Yesterday I visited Mlle. Sallé, there I found your brother and the young Bernard. She complains of my neglect of the verse for her portrait; Bernard declared that he had never before written on such a beautiful subject; I was suddenly inspired by her presence and produced these lines:

"Les feux du dieu que sa vertu condamne
Sont dans ses yeux, à son coeur inconnus.
En soupirant, on la prend pour Diane
Qui vient danser sous les traits de Vénus."

It was not however these lines that appeared on the print but a verse by Gentil-Bernard, a quotation from Virgil and some lines in English by Pope and Gay who had met Mlle. Sallé when she had danced in London.

Under the portrait was the quotation in Latin from the first book of *Aeneas*.

"VERA INCESSU PATUIT DEA"
to the right the verse in English.

"I know her now the sylvan goddess cries,
Aeneas saw her once in such disguise,
Delusion vain, her grace, her easy mein,
Her every step discloses beauty's queen.
But soon the laughing nymphs the fraud confessed,
For they to grace her feast; had Sallé dressed."

To the left were the lines by Gentil-Bernard.

"Maîtresse de cet art que guide l'harmonie
Je peins les passions, j'exprime la gaieté;
Je joins des pas brillants au feu de mon génie,
Les grâces, la justesse à la légèreté,
Sans offenser l'aimable modestie
Qui de mon sexe augmente la beauté."

Voltaire was not pleased that his verse had not been used and he did not hide his displeasure. In a letter to Thieriot he wrote about the doggerel that had been used on the print.

"I have seen the lines in French that the young Bernard has addressed to your idol. They are not



AN ENGRAVING OF THE
LANCRET PORTRAIT OF
MLLE. MARIE SALLÉ.
THE ORIGINAL DISAP-
PEARED IN 1843.

good and no more suitable than those written by Pope and Gay. The reason is simple. The painting is an allusion in itself, the prudery of your nymph being expressed by the temple of Diana. One must connect this allegory with the other allusion to the first book of Virgil; women and men of little culture will understand nothing of it, even men of letters, on reading it will find little in it until they recall the passage from Virgil."

The picture itself explains the reference that Voltaire makes to Diana. Boucher in his book on 18th century engravings describes the picture:

"In a wooded landscape, Mlle. Sallé, faces front, the head leaning slightly to the left, a lock of hair falls over her shoulder, she is dancing, the arms are open to the right and the left. She wears a dress ornamented with flowers and ribbons. On the left are three women dancing, to the right, four little boys standing or sitting on the ground are playing the musette or the flute. At the side, a round temple decorated with columns, in the centre of which is a statue of Diana holding her bow in her hand."

To link the name of Mlle. Sallé with that of the virgin goddess Diana was apt, for her virtue was well-known, it was even counted among the four marvels of the Opera—the other three being the voice of Mlle. Lemaure, the calf muscle of M. Dupré and the legs of Mlle. Mariette: but as Voltaire remarks in his letter, the quotation from Virgil was ill-chosen since it refers not to Diana but to Venus in the disguise of a huntress.

The whereabouts of the picture are not known today. Along with its companion "La Camargo dancing" it was part of the collection at the castle of Rheinsberg of Frederick the Great when he was Crown Prince, who gave them to his brother, Prince August of Prussia, who gave them in 1813 to a Mlle. V---; in 1864 they became part of the Péreire Collection. In the disposal of this collection in 1872 they were separated. Sir Richard Wallace bought the painting of Camargo, which today forms part of the Wallace Collection. The portrait of Mlle. Sallé was bought by M. le comte de Camondo who later sold it to a private collector. Its last public appearance was at a sale in Paris on February 1st, 1893. Perhaps one day it will appear again, and be it but an idle fancy, it would be pleasant if it could be placed in Hertford House by the side of "La Camargo."

Ballet Theatre

News has just arrived from New York that Alicia Alonso, who for the past three years has been touring in South America and Mexico with her own company, is joining Ballet Theatre for their European tour. Mary Ellen Moylan, formerly ballerina with the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, is also joining Ballet Theatre, but Diana Adams and Hugh Laing are leaving to appear in a big Broadway musical this autumn.

HOW I BECAME A FAMOUS DANCER

By HENRI DE VARGAS

ONE day while casually wandering up Charing Cross Road I came upon a shop doorway. I stopped in amazement for the massive padlock and heavily barred gate which had greeted me whenever I had passed before were gone, and the door was open. Drawn by an irresistible force, I entered. Books and magazines relating to the dance confronted me on every side and, although not in the least interested, I picked one up and casually glanced through its pages. An hour later I had decided to become a famous ballet dancer. Now I needed a good school and from the many hundreds listed in the various magazines eventually narrowed my choice down to two. Should I try my luck with the school which boasted of its Russian teachers or would I feel more at home with that which apologised for its English ones? Well, the Russians had the prettier advertisement so I chose them. Followed by the kindly smile of the old white haired assistant I rushed into the street and, before the spirit had time to leave me, hastily drew up a kerbstone, sharpened my quill, unrolled some parchment, opened an artery and wrote the secretary a letter.

Many months later, when I had given up all hope of a reply and was seriously thinking of becoming a famous opera star, a letter arrived. Laying aside my palette and telling the model to rest, I opened it and read: "Come tomorrow morning at ten for an audition". Hmm! Ten o'clock in the morning was an unearthly hour, and I was rather busy anyway, I had promised my publisher those poems by Friday and . . . Oh hang it! the trombone concerto could wait.

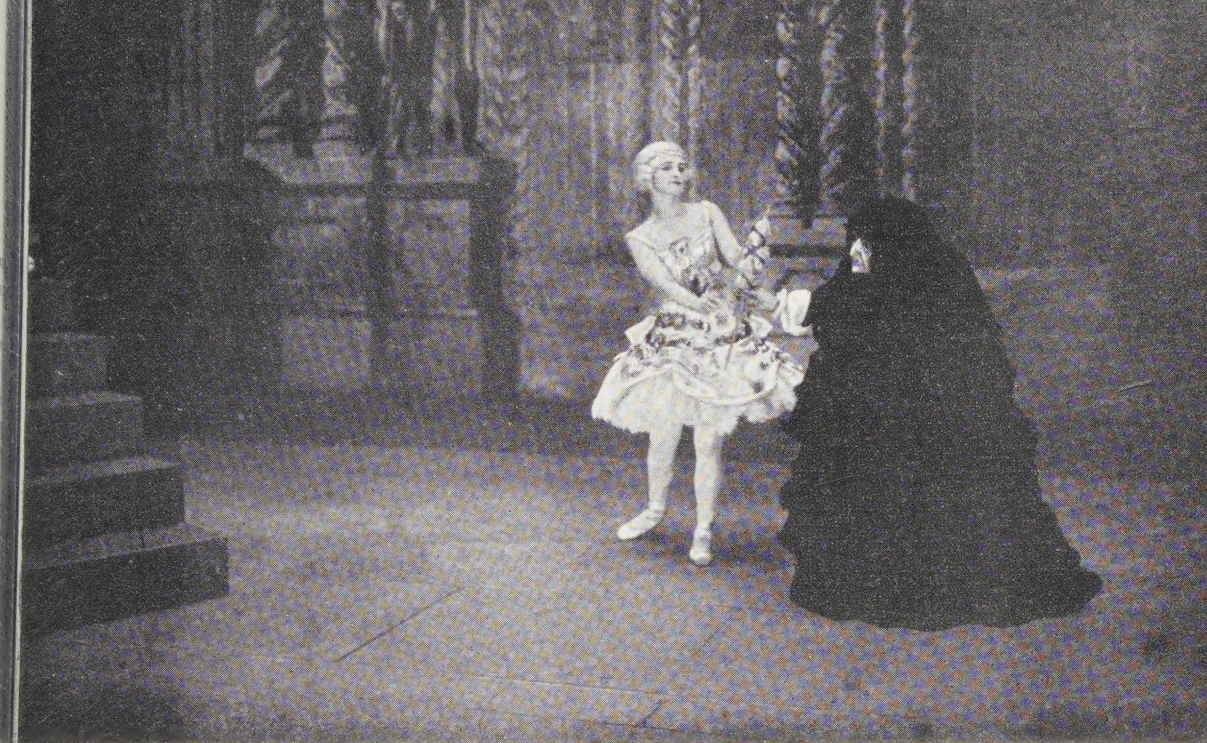
The following morning at 9.45 found me leaning on a lamp-post outside the tube station nearest the school. I was looking for someone. A few minutes before I had asked a sheikh, a freak and a woman with a peke if they could direct me to the school; they had never heard of it so I leaned on the lamp-post and waited. Suddenly I saw her, yes! there could be no doubt about it. Who was she? I had not the vaguest idea and indeed had never seen her before in my life, but there is no mistaking that waddle and as I furtively shadowed her I knew she would lead me to the school. With each step I became increasingly apprehensive as to what I would be expected to do at this audition for I was very much in the dark concerning technique, even though I had taken a few lessons in a crumbling Soho chapel. I tried to work out some steps in my head and had actually started to unravel the complexities of a *temps levé* when the girl suddenly disappeared behind a large

wooden door on which the name of the school was proudly embossed in peeling pea-green paint, and in a second I had done the same.

A long deserted corridor of closed doors greeted me. Before I had time to wonder which one led to the men's dressing room I distinguished what I took to be male voices issuing from the room nearest me so, guessing this to be it, I put on my boldest face and brazenly entered. That I had made a colossal bloomer was evident the moment my eyes alighted on a dainty pair of . . . anyway it was the wrong dressing room so, to the sweet tune of female shrieks and screams which one usually associates with mice and men, I hastily withdrew. At the next keyhole I listened more attentively and, on hearing voices disputing the ownership of a hairnet, knew I need look no further. It was clear from the tone of those rising voices that if a murder was to be prevented I had to act quickly, so without a moment's hesitation I threw open the door and presented the smaller of the antagonists with a spare, which I always carried in case of emergency. This Christian action touched the hearts of all and no time was lost in making me welcome and letting me know what I was in for. Apparently I would have to take part in the class and then go before the Russian who would doubtless set me some complicated *enchâînement*. Further information was cut short by the banging of a stick upon the wall of the next room to the accompaniment of loud Russian curses. The lesson was about to begin.

On entering the class-room I made a dive for the middle of the nearest bar so that I could always be sure of someone to follow, and then glanced around the room. I saw the inevitable old hag at the piano, the usual distorting mirrors, the usual bars just about to leave their sockets, and the usual pretty girls who had the same effect upon my eyes. The Russian, much to my surprise, was a kind of Baga Yaga heavily made up in a moth-eaten fur coat and cigarette-holder. I could not see the broomstick but her favourite feline admirers were all around her, and it was not until she had tired of their purring and gently shoed them away to their own bars that the lesson commenced.

From the word *plié* it was a game of follow the leader as far as I was concerned and believe me I had plenty to choose from for, like the Caucus-race in *Alice in Wonderland*, everyone took their own time and began and left off just when they felt like it. The Russian, with her head in the clouds (of her own



THIS RARE AND HITHERTO UNPUBLISHED PICTURE HAS AN HISTORICAL INTEREST, FOR IT SHOWS LUBOV EGOROVA AS PRINCESS AURORA AND CARLOTTA BRIANZA REHEARSING THE SPINDLE EPISODE OF "THE SLEEPING PRINCESS" IN THE 1921 DIAGHILEV PRODUCTION. THE PHOTOGRAPH MUST HAVE BEEN TAKEN AT A DRESS REHEARSAL, FOR EGOROVA IS WEARING AURORA'S WEDDING DRESS AND THE SCENERY IS THAT OF THE LAST ACT

tobacco smoke) was oblivious to all. When we left the bar for the centre I followed my usual custom of hurrying to the rear, where not much to my surprise I found the rest of the men, one of whom mentioned that the Russian was very short-sighted. Directly I learned that she could not see me I stopped acting and just gazed at her, fascinated by the smoke which, besides pouring from her nose and mouth, also gently cascaded from her ears. So entranced was I that it was not until the end of the lesson when everybody had finished bowing to and thanking everybody else that I noticed a newcomer to the scene, someone whom I immediately put down as being one of those ballet mamas I had heard so much about. I was therefore quite surprised when her face cracked into a smile and she beckoned me towards her. What on earth could an old woman of fifty want with a young man of twenty-one? I danced over to find out. She was not a ballet mama, she was the secretary—and she had been watching me all the time. After I had successfully explained away my inactivity by a troublesome nail in my shoe, she introduced me to the Russian who was now seeing me for the first time. Now for it; what would she ask me to do? If it was *tours en l'air* should I

risk a three, or just be content with my normal two? Before I had time to decide, she barked out "Give me first position."

This was an insult but nevertheless I obeyed. "O.K." she moaned, You're in; but next time try not to fall on your face."

The rest is history.

Editorial Comment—(continued from page 3)

success in her own right. She also danced the two Saturday performances at the Dome, Brighton, the following week. Sadler's Wells also most generously gave her permission to dance at the Albert Hall, but as this engagement was cancelled immediately it was known of Markova's illness it was found impossible to re-start negotiations in time.

Congratulations to Frederick Ashton on his C.B.E. which I know he receives with pride, not so much as a tribute to his own work but to the Ballet whose cause he has served so faithfully for so many years.

P.W.M.

Two Dance Recitals

JUANA, who opened in "Dance Portraits of Many Lands" at the Fortune on June 6th for a week, was a pupil of La Meri, and, like her, specializes in solo interpretations of the native dances of less familiar parts of the world.

The yardstick for her accuracy in the dances with which we were not familiar was, of course, her performance of those with which we were; and by that measure we must acclaim her a dancer of erudition as well as artistry.

Slight faults in the carriage of head and shoulders in the Spanish dances cannot prevent one delighting in the concentrated accuracy of her footwork.

This is the strongest point in all her dancing, coupled with very lovely and characteristic use of her hands and excellent head movement in the Indian and Philippino dances.

Consuelo Carmona and Angelo Andes, opening one of their rare London seasons at the Watergate on June 12th, gave a varied and well-balanced programme, expertly presented, entirely overcoming the inevitable disturbance of working with a new pianist, even one so good as Alan Jellen.

Ever to improve is the hallmark of the true artist, and it is one with which this partnership is abundantly stamped. They continue to add depth to the interpretation until the dances, redolent of Spain though they are, reflect the humour, the sadness and the dignity that is latent in all humanity.

L.G.S.

A New Stage for the Amateur Theatre

Ballet Clubs and Amateur Dramatic Societies in the London district will be interested to know that the Metropolitan Borough of Paddington is now providing excellent accommodation for the production of stage shows of all descriptions during the months of November to March, at PADDINGTON HALL, Queensway, London, W.2.

The overall width of the stage will be 38ft. (with an opening of 24ft. x 13ft.) with ample room in the wings. It will be equipped with a cyclorama and provision will also be made for a curved apron stage which will be 6ft. at its maximum depth. Sets of curtains will also be provided for those productions which do not require scenery. Full lighting equipment and orchestra accommodation for musical productions will additionally be available.

The hall floor measures 80ft. x 52ft. and will accommodate approximately 500 seats, while a further 190 seats will be available in the balcony.

For the scale of charges and further particulars, please apply to Mr. H. Leadbeater, Superintendent, Central Baths, Queensway, London, W.2.

Bouquet of the Month



This month's bouquet goes to the dancer (un-named in the programme) who leads the Can-can with such spirit in the International Ballet revival of *Gaieté Parisienne*. This is a performance of tremendous bravura which stands out in a production which is a little slow and careful at the moment. Although this dancer did not get a programme credit, enquiry elicited the information that it was ALMA WATSON, who deserves every bit of the applause she receives.

Ballet Rambert Tour

Here are details of the current tour of the Ballet Rambert.

July 24th	Theatre Royal, Exeter.
July 31st	Royal Hall, Harrogate.
August 7th	New Theatre, Hull.
August 14th	Repertory Theatre, Birmingham, for two weeks.
August 28th	Theatre Royal, Bath.

During the week at Bath, David Paltenghi's first ballet, *St. Agnes' Eve*, to music by Delius, will be presented.

Madame Eugene Poplavska Sergueeff

We regret to announce the death on June 9th of Madame Eugene Poplavska Sergueeff, wife of M. Nicolai Sergueeff. Madame Sergueeff was a pupil of her husband and came to London with him in 1921 when she appeared in the *corps de ballet* of the Diaghilev production of *The Sleeping Princess*. She later danced leading roles in the National Latvian Ballet at Riga.

Madame Sergueeff taught in the International Ballet School from its inception in 1943 up to within a month of her death.

Our deepest sympathy is extended to M. Nicolai Sergueeff in his great loss.



Photograph by Maurice Seymour

IGOR YOUSKEVITCH WHO WILL BE DANCING WITH BALLET THEATRE AT THE EDINBURGH FESTIVAL AND THEIR SUBSEQUENT LONDON SEASON WHICH OPENS ON AUGUST 28TH. YOUSKEVITCH IS CONSIDERED BY MANY TO BE THE GREATEST MALE CLASSICAL DANCER OF THE DAY, SO HIS RETURN TO THIS COUNTRY AFTER TWELVE YEARS IS AWAITED WITH EVEN MORE THAN USUAL INTEREST

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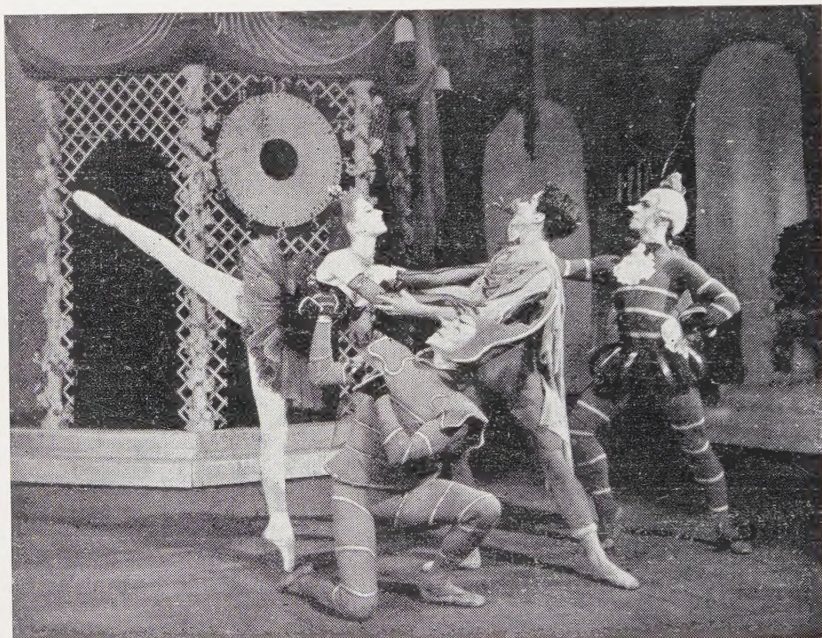
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